

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:
an elongate member having dimensions suitable for insertion into a body and a distal portion suitable for insertion into tissue;
at least one thermally conductive heating element coupled to ~~a~~ the distal portion of the elongate member, the heating element comprising material whose electrical resistance changes in response to a change in temperature; and
an interface to a balanced circuit having the heating element and a variable resistor as resistive circuit elements, wherein the balanced circuit measures a first differential resistance between the heating element and the variable resistor in response to a first condition and a second differential resistance in response to a second condition in circuitry to indicate a change of conditions related to a distance of penetration of the thermally conductive heating element into a tissue.
2. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the elongate member comprises a needle.
3. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 2, wherein the needle has an outer diameter between 0.009 inches and 0.134 inches.
4. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 2, wherein the needle comprises a material of at least one of stainless steel and ceramic.
5. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the elongate member is a rod.
6. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the heating element comprises at least one of a wire, a film, and a thermistor material.
7. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the heating element has a length which is approximately equal to or less than the thickness of a tissue in to which at least a portion of the elongate member is to be inserted.

8. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 7, wherein the length of the heating element is between 0.010 inches and 0.400 inches.

9. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the anemometry circuitry interface comprises:

a first electrically conductive lead electrically coupled to a first end of the heating element; and

a second electrically conductive lead electrically coupled to a second end of the heating element.

10. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein a portion of the elongate member comprises an electrically conductive material and wherein the anemometry circuitry interface comprises:

an electrically conductive lead electrically coupled to a first end of the heating element, and

the elongate member electrically coupled to a second end of the heating element.

11. (Previously Presented) An apparatus comprising:

a needle having dimensions suitable for insertion into a body;

at least one thermally conductive heating element coupled to a portion of the needle, the heating element comprising material whose electrical resistance changes in response to a change in temperature; and

anemometry circuitry electrically coupled to the heating element, wherein the circuitry comprises a balanced circuit having the heating element and a variable resistor as resistive circuit elements.

12. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 11, wherein the needle has an outer diameter between 0.009 inches and 0.134 inches.

13. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 11, wherein the needle comprises a material of at least one of stainless steel and ceramic.

14. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 11, wherein the heating element comprises at least one of a wire, a film, and a thermistor material.

15. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 11, wherein the heating element has a length which is approximately equal to or less than the thickness of a tissue in to which at least a portion of the needle is to be inserted.

16. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 15, wherein the length of the heating element is between 0.010 inches and 0.400 inches.

17. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 11, wherein the anemometry circuitry is electrically coupled to a first end of the heating element by a first electrically conductive lead and is electrically coupled to a second end of the heating element by a second electrically conductive lead.

18. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 11, wherein a portion of the elongate member comprises an electrically conductive material and wherein the anemometry circuitry is electrically coupled to a first end of the heating element by an electrically conductive lead and is electrically coupled to a second end of the heating element by the elongate member.

19. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 11, wherein the anemometry circuitry comprises:

a circuit having the heating element and a variable resistor as resistive circuit elements; and

an amplifier electrically coupled to the circuit

to sense the difference in voltage drop across the heating element and the variable resistor caused by the difference between a first resistance of the heating element and a resistance of the variable resistor,

to amplify the voltage difference, and

to input the amplified voltage difference back to the circuit to cause a modification of a temperature of the heating element such that the heating element assumes a second resistance.

20. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 19, wherein a plurality of heating elements are coupled along a length of the elongate member, and further comprising:

anemometry circuitry separately coupled to each of the heating elements such that the heat dissipation characteristics measured by the plurality of anemometry circuits can be used to determine at least one of injection depth and tissue type.

21-25. Canceled.

26. (New) The apparatus of Claim 11 wherein the needle has dimensions suitable for insertion into a tissue of the body and the balanced circuit is configured to measure a distance of penetration of the thermally conductive heating element into the tissue.